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## NEWS



## LETTER

A Research Center for Turf and Field Sports,  
their History and Social Significance

Middleburg, Virginia 22117

June 1977

Nancy Cole, Editor

Vol. III, No. 1

### PATRICK NISBETT EDGAR AND HIS STUD BOOK OF 1833

By Alexander Mackay-Smith

The first published Stud Book of any kind was James Weatherby's "Introduction to a General (Thoroughbred) Stud Book" which appeared in London in 1791. Of all the many pedigree books of many breeds of livestock which have appeared in print since that date, undoubtedly the most entertaining is "*The American Race-Turf Register, Sportsman's Herald, and General Stud Book: containing the Pedigrees of the most Celebrated Horses, Mares, and Geldings, that have distinguished themselves as Racers on the American Turf, from one quarter of a mile race up to four miles and repeat; also, such as have been kept in the stud - as stallions and mares for breeding, from the earliest period to the present time: and from which have descended the most valuable blooded stock at present in the United States. The whole calculated for the use and information of Amateurs, Breeders, and Trainers of that most noble and useful animal, the Horse. Compiled from the Papers, Letters, Memorandums, Stud-Books and Newspapers; also from other sources of the most correct information. By Patrick Nisbett Edgar, of Granville County, North Carolina. In Two Vols. — Vol. I. New York. Press of Henry Mason, Printed for the Proprietor, Patrick N. Edgar & Co. MDCCCXXXIII*" (1833).

Patrick Nisbett Edgar was born in Dublin, Ireland, about 1785, the son of a prosperous merchant. Some time after his father's death in 1794, young Patrick is reputed to have killed the family gardener and to have fled to this country. Ireland has long been famous for its horses and its horsemen, and Edgar was definitely a horseman. We know that he was in Mecklenburgh County, Virginia, as early as 1808, because in the October 1833 issue of the American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine, when living at Lynesville, Warren County, North Carolina, he noted that in 1808 he had secured the pedigrees of the horses Whalebone and Ostrich from Mr. Allen Young of "Cox's Creek" in that county. He next appears as a subscriber to the first edition of a popular farriery (veterinary) book, Richard Mason's "Gentleman's New Pocket Companion", published in Petersburg, Virginia, in 1811, where Edgar is listed as living in Greensville County, Virginia.

From about 1760 to 1830 the Thoroughbred breeding center of this country was what was called "The Old Race Horse Region", the counties lying on either side of the Virginia-North Carolina border, the district watered by the Roanoke River which meanders leisurely through the broad and fertile fields along its bank. The great plantation owners of the Roanoke Valley had ample means, derived chiefly from tobacco, to indulge their passion for horse racing - from 1761 to 1780 there stood in this area imported JANUS, the foundation sire of 18th century Quarter Running Horses; and from 1810 to 1833 in North

Carolina, SIR ARCHY, known as "The Godolphin Arabian of America" and the foundation sire of American distance strains. With characteristic hospitality Edgar was made welcome by the Roanoke planters with whom he passed the remainder of his life (he died in 1857), staying a few months or a few years, sometimes teaching school, his worldly possessions and his pedigree notes contained in capacious saddle bags, now in the possession of the Virginia Historical Society. Because of his somewhat pompous manner he was known as "Sir Patrick" and as "Edie Ochiltree" after the pedantic scholar of that name in Sir Walter Scott's novel, "The Antiquarian", Fairfax Harrison wrote (Background of the American Stud Book, 1933, p. 69): "The uniform tradition is that he never abused this hospitality and that he always found a tactful way of showing appreciation of it to his hostesses. It is a test of his good manners, too, that he was uniformly popular with the servants of his friends. A negro

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"Diamond Grove" on Meherrin River, Brunswick County, Virginia, the residence of Captain James J. Harrison. In 1822 Patrick Nisbett Edgar brought his chestnut Thoroughbred mare Rosetta to Diamond Grove to be bred to Captain Harrison's Virginian (by Sir Archy), the produce being the brown mare Cameleon. In the same year Harrison induced Edgar to join him in the collection of pedigrees eventually published in Edgar's Stud Book of 1833.

Photograph Courtesy of the Virginia State Library

who survived into the twentieth century testified in his great age: 'I shan't forgit Sir Patrick. He once giv' me a silver dollar for holding' his mare'."

By 1820 he had acquired a Thoroughbred mare, Rossetta, which he bred in that year to Director and in 1822 to Virginian, both horses belonging to Captain James J. Harrison of "Diamond Grove", on Meher-rin River, Brunswick County, Virginia, later President of the Richmond Jockey Club, who in the later years also retired the great race horse and sire Sir Charles to stud. Because none of these stallions were eligible for registration in the (British) General Stud Book, Vol. II of which had just been published, and their popularity as sires adversely affected in consequence, Captain Harrison decided to undertake the compilation and publication of an American Stud Book. He enlisted the help of two lieutenants, Theophilus Feild, President of the Richmond Jockey Club, and Patrick Edgar. Unfortunately the former died in May, 1826, at which time Captain Harrison, realizing that he had neither the time, perseverance or temperament to compile a Stud Book, offered the whole project to Edgar which he accepted.

#### COMPILATION

Edgar took over the American Stud Book project with several handicaps. Because Harrison and Feild had ample means, exalted positions, wide acquaintance and extensive experience in racing and breeding, their authorship of a Stud Book would have given it great weight and financial success. Edgar, on the other hand, had no money, not even a house of his own; no position except that of a compiler; an acquaintance based on limited travel and his personal charm; no experience in racing, and little in breeding. Although extraordinarily industrious, he did not have the analytical mind of the historian. As a temperamental Celt he had a hot temper and never forgave what he considered to be an injury, even omitting in his Stud-book the horses of his "enemies".

Edgar recorded how he began his labors in a letter headed "Lynessville, N.C., Aug. 11, 1840" published on p. 492 of the September 1840 issue of the American Turf Register: - "In the year 1822 I was, through the kindness of a very respectable gentleman (Capt. Harrison) — politely put into the possession of several barrels and hogsheads of old papers, belonging to the estates of upwards of twenty-five deceased gentlemen. Upon a thorough examination of the same I found manifold pedigrees." During the succeeding six years, he explained: - "I have travelled upwards of 15,000 miles; & have written and rec'd several thousand letters on the subject. I have at this time upwards of 7,500 pedigrees in possession" (from a letter headed "Williamsboro, North Carolina, Augt. 5th, 1828," addressed to General John Hartwell Cocke, now in the possession of the University of Virginia Library).

The pedigrees collected by others were also of great assistance. On June 19, 1827,

Capt. Harrison wrote (Vol. IX American Farmer, p. 148): - "The last five years I have been constantly writing for pedigrees. I have procured a great many." These he turned over to Edgar. It has been assumed (by Fairfax Harrison, op. cit. p. 25, and others that Edgar also had access to and made use of the Feild pedigrees in compiling his Stud-book of 1833, an assumption based on his statement in the November 1843 issue of the American Turf Register (p. 622): - "In looking over the MSS of the late Theo. Field, Esq. I find a very fine thoroughbred mare" etc. In the letter of Aug. 5, 1828, to General Cocke cited above, however, Edgar wrote: - "The late Mr. Field dec'd and myself a few years past, contemplated publishing the American Stud Book. He took one district, and I another. Since his death (Aug., 1826) I have been unable to procure the manuscripts I furnished, from his representative." It seems unlikely that this "representative" would at that time have given Edgar the Feild pedigrees.

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Williamsboro, North Carolina, Aug. 5th, 1828

Yours truly,  
Patrick Edgar

**Letter from Patrick Edgar to General John Hartwell Cocke requesting pedigree material and describing Edgar's labors in gathering and recording information for the proposed American Stud Book.**

**From the Cocke Family Papers - University of Virginia Library**

That Edgar was anxious to obtain all possible outside help is indicated by an advertisement in the March 14, 1828, issue of the American Farmer (p. 415): - "Wanted - A copy of John Bioren's American Racing Calendar and Stud-book, containing the pedigrees of all the imported horses and mares; - also, celebrated horses and mares of America; for which five dollars will be paid. This book was published in 1805, by John Bioren, of Philadelphia. Your obedient servant, P.N.E." Edgar was misinformed. Bioren did in fact publish a proposal for an American Stud Book in the Washington,

New York and Richmond newspapers in October 1815 (Harrison, op. cit. p. 21) but nothing came of it.

Substantial help came, however, from the weekly American Farmer and the monthly American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine, founded (1819, 1829), published (Baltimore) and edited by John Stuart Skinner. In the April 9 and May 7, 1824, issues of the Farmer, Skinner published particulars, including pedigrees, of the studs of John Randolph of Roanoke (1773-1833) and for the years 1791-1810, of John Tayloe III of Mt. Airy. Thoroughbred pedigree data was thenceforth regularly contributed to or reprinted by these two periodicals, of which Edgar made good use.

Another major source was secured through his acquaintance with John Randolph to whose stallion Roanoke Edgar took his home-bred mare Cameleon in the spring of 1828. Randolph generously made available to Edgar his superb turf library, the best in the United States, which included a complete set of the annual British Racing Calendars from 1751 onwards (now owned by the Virginia Historical Society). Fairfax Harrison wrote (op. cit. p. 70): - "Randolph of Roanoke does not seem to have taken Edgar seriously; certainly he did not take the trouble to give him his best. His casually expressed opinions, even the most extravagant, were nevertheless cherished by Edgar, developed and faithfully recorded, and must have mortified Randolph if he had lived to appreciate his responsibility for some of them. — If Randolph had appreciated that the uncritical entries thus formulated under his roof were to be crystallized in (Bruce's) the American Stud Book a generation later (1873), he might have taken the trouble to educate Edgar in the art and mystery of interpreting the English Calendars; but he must have resented the suggestion that thereby he would have accomplished his greatest contribution to the history of the American horse."

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On February 11, 1831 Edgar deposited in the office of the Clerk of the District of Columbia "the title of a book the right whereof he claims as author in the following words to wit: ". These words were identical with those which appeared on the title page when the book was finally published in 1833. It contained endorsements from four gentlemen of Brunswick County, Virginia dated March 3rd, 5th, 8th and 10th, 1832, namely Captain Harrison, Thomas Gibbon, John Tucker and Miles B. Branch. Endorsements from Caswell County, North Carolina, dated June 12th and July 15th, 1832 came from Barzillai Graves, proprietor of the Milton Race Course, and Warren Dixon. Dated August 25th, 1833 (possibly a misprint for 1832) is an endorsement from John C. Goode of Mecklenburg County, Virginia. The book is dedicated to Captain James J. Harrison "Father of the American Turf" a designation more inspired by gratitude than based

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on fact, in spite of Harrison's undoubted eminence. Perhaps because the latter had so requested, there is no acknowledgement of the fact it was Captain Harrison who had started the whole stud book project and turned it over to Edgar after Feild's death. At the end of the book is an endorsement dated September 1st, 1833, and signed by Henry Mason, the printer, and William T. Porter, editor of the great sporting weekly, *The Spirit of the Times*, founded in 1831 which was to continue in various forms till 1902. We may assume that September 1st is the publication date.

The book contains traditional Roanoke Valley breeding certificates collected personally by Edgar. It also contains historical Virginia and Maryland turf pedigrees, many of them supported by contemporary newspaper advertisements, collected primarily from the files of *The American Farmer* and *The American Turf Register*. From Virginia we have the pedigrees supplied by James J. Harrison, John Randolph of Roanoke and (possibly) by Theophilus Feild; from Maryland pedigrees supplied by Judge Gabriel Duvall, Thomas M. Forman and John Stuart Skinner; and from North Carolina pedigrees collected by George W. Jeffreys, originally published serially in the newspaper *The Petersburg (Virginia) "Intelligencer"* and in the 5th (1830) edition of Mason's "Farrier". There are a few pedigrees from South Carolina supplied by O'Brien Smith and John C. Calhoun. Edgar spent some time in New York seeing his book through the press. The preface is dated "Valentine's Day, 14th February, 1833" and in signing the dedication Edgar used the address "Williamsboro', State of North Carolina". One can therefore assume that his stay in New York was during some months between February 14th and September 1st, 1833, the date of Porter's endorsement. While he was in New York Edgar collected additional pedigree material, not only from William T. Porter of *The Spirit of the Times*, but also from previous pedigree contributors to the *American Turf Register*, including Charles Henry Hall, owner of the famous race mare and brood mare Lady Lightfoot. An even more important contact was Cadwallader R. Colden, editor and publisher of the *New York Sporting Magazine* (1833-34) and of the *United States Sporting Magazine* (1835-36). Colden traced his own breeding stock back to the pre-revolutionary New York DeLancey stud. From these individuals and others Edgar collected pedigrees of both American bred stallions and mares and also of 29 importations from England into New York and Connecticut.

Edgar set forth in his book not only details as to name, sex, color, foaling date, breeder, owner and death date, but also anecdotes about the horses and mares entered. He preserved many of the most entertaining stories in American racing, particularly those of the Quarter Running Horses belonging to his hosts and their ancestors which he distinguished with the initials F A Q R H meaning Famous American Quarter Running Horse, varied with C for Celebrated or M for Mare. For



The saddle bags in which Edgar carried the pedigree and performance notes he collected from the plantation owners of Virginia and Carolina stud farms.

Courtesy of the Virginia Historical Society.

example we are told that Peacock, foaled in 1760 "was one of the swiftest quarter of a mile racers in America of his day and won upwards of \$40,000". Then there is the story of Polly Williams, foaled about 1774, and a match race on this mare made between "Old Mr. Davis and the late Mr. Henry Delony of Mecklenburgh County, Virginia for 500 pounds Virginia currency," which ended by the mare being murdered to collect the bet. The story of Paddy Whack, foaled in 1778, includes bets of 80,000 and 100,000 pounds of tobacco and the statement that "frequently when taken to strange places, his appearance was altered in order to procure races to be made upon him". Under the entry of Sweeping-tail is the story of how she was captured by the British, stolen back when her owner posted a reward of 400 guineas in gold, and then re-captured by Lord Cornwallis who "always kept her ready saddled and bridled for his escape in case of his capture, under a very strong guard". There is the story of Twigg "the swiftest horse on earth for 300 yards, carrying a feather" (i.e. the lightest possible weight) and the races in which he won over a million pounds of tobacco.

Edgar's book contains about 3,500 entries and a promise of a second volume in which, following Mr. Weatherby's example, all brood mares were to be listed alphabetically with their produce arranged chronologically under the name of each mare.

#### RECEPTION AND SALE

In addition to the handicaps listed above under which Edgar labored, he had begun to destroy the confidence of the public in his book even before it was published. We have already mentioned Edgar's credulity as far as the pronouncements of John

Randolph of Roanoke were concerned. This is further manifested in the July 13th, 1827, issue of the *American Farmer*, Edgar's first appearance in print, in which he repeated a preposterous story about the Godolphin Arabian told him as a joke by a Virginian educated at Cambridge University, England, a story which George W. Jeffrey courteously but promptly exploded. Edgar's first submission of pedigrees in print was in the August, 1830, issue of the *American Turf Register* (p.623). This included 33 "pedigrees selected for the *American Turf Register* and *Sporting Magazine* by the compiler of the *American Race Turf Register* and *General Stud Book*". Fairfax Harrison (op. cit., p. 70) calls this "a preposterous essay in historical pedigrees". Edgar had to back-water hastily. In the October issue under the heading "Corrections" he addressed a letter to the editor reading "among the list of pedigrees sent you, some time past, mistakes occurred: being transcribed from a copy taken from the stud books of a very old gentleman. Since their publication I have re-examined them from the original. Have the goodness to correct them". There follow corrections for five out of the thirty-two originally listed. Far more serious, however, was the inquiry into the pedigree of Reality, the great race and brood mare belonging to Colonel William Ransome Johnson, "The Napoleon of the Turf". In the August 1832 issue of the *American Turf Register* (p. 594) the editor wrote "In prosecuting the inquiry we have received from Colonel Johnson and other gentlemen every facility and assistance except from P. N. Edgar, Esq., compiler of the long promised *American Race Turf Register*, *Sportsman's Herald*, *General Stud Book* - who says the next inquiries through your Register, I suppose, will be

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made for the full pedigree of Johnson's Reality - I have got it under the signature of Marmaduke Johnson, Esq., deceased (father of W. R. Johnson) signed in March 1805' and adds that 'it will be published in the second volume of the General Stud Book, but not before, entirely on account of Colonel Johnson's illiberality to me in not giving me the smallest assistance whatsoever in the compilation of the General Stud Book'. The editor commented "is it not questionable, whether an author has the right to keep back facts, in which many third persons are deeply interested, in order to gratify private resentment? We should think it among the last resorts of an historian, seeking to inspire confidence in his works".

Reviews of Edgar's book were published in the January and March 1834 issues of the American Turf Register (p.p. 242, 339). The first was contained in a letter by Judge Gabriel Duvall dated November 20th, 1833 which reads "I have perused Mr. Edgar's Stud Book and think it a valuable compilation. I discovered a few errors and have suggested the corrections — as accuracy is a principal object in the publication of the work they may be corrected in the second volume without labor or difficulty". There follow corrections on sixteen different pages. An equally eminent reviewer was Benjamin Ogle Tayloe of the Octagon House, Washington, D. C. which reads in part: - "This work, so much and so long a desideratum, though doing great credit to the indefatigable exertions of the intelligent and zealous editor, omits to give the pedigrees of many of our horses of most celebrity that are wanting to render such a work complete, and has some errors in regard to others. - A second edition or another work might be as complete as the nature of the case would permit." Later reviewers were less kind. In his "Horse of America", 1857, (Vol. I, p. 435) Henry William Herbert ("Frank Forester") comments that Colonel Hoomes of "The Bowling Green" and other commercial importers of the 1790's and early 1800's "commonly manufactured the most impudently mendacious pedigrees for horses, either not Thoroughbred at all, or of the most ordinary and worthless strains of blood". He also accuses Edgar of adopting these pedigrees uncritically. "So — whenever a particularly gorgeous pedigree occurs, one at once finds, on reference to authorities, that the horse is not so much as named, nor any dam to be discovered which could probably have borne him in the English Stud Books". John H. Wallace, editor of the early volumes of the Standardbred (harness race horse) Stud Book in his "Horse of America" (1897) enumerates: (p. 100) - "the prevailing absence of dates and all means by which the truth or falsity of a pedigree could be determined; the astounding number of crosses given, even to the immediate descendants of imported sires; the multitude of animals never heard of before nor since, with pedigrees extended a dozen crosses; and the absence of many animals everyone had heard of." Even the sympathetic Fairfax Harrison said "Edgar — was led into mortifying

misinterpretations by an obsession that it was his duty to place all the American foundation stock into the (British) General Stud Book" (op. cit. p. 29). He also commented on "Edgar's practice of emendation of his documents with his own often perverse interpretations, without indication of the sutures" (Vol. II, Early American Turf Stock, p. 13).

Under the above circumstances Edgar's book was a financial disaster, particularly for a man of such slender means. Contemporary horsemen were in no position to appreciate the enormous legacy left to future turf historians by Edgar or even to appreciate its highly entertaining qualities. What they wanted was an accurate record of pedigrees which they could consult with confidence and this Edgar's book did not supply. Edgar was crushed - for four years he retired to North Carolina to lick his wounds.

Finally in the autumn of 1837 a backing came from William T. Porter, whose endorsement of the book dated September 1st, 1833 was published in its concluding paragraphs. Once John Stuart Skinner had given up the editorship of the American Turf Register (August 1833) the Spirit of the Times had become the leading periodical devoted to racing and the Thoroughbred. In the January 13th, 1838 issue (Vol. VIII, p. 404) Edgar offered to publish Volume II if he received 1300 subscriptions and sold all the remaining copies of Volume I before September 1st, 1838. If these conditions were not met he threatened to send all his material to Liverpool to "be buried forever". This was hardly a tactful way to approach American horsemen. Allan Jones Davie, one of the leading turf writers of the era, (Spirit of the Times, June 22, 1839, Vol. 9, p. 187) wrote: "I shall hold myself under the highest obligation to that man who may suggest any plan that shall not only prevent its publication (Volume II), but suppress the volume already out". The controversy continued in the pages of the Spirit and of the American Turf Register which Porter acquired in March 1839. In 1841, after Davie had rashly ventured an unsupported opinion upon a pedigree matter, Edgar had the ultimate satisfaction of taking him to task and proving him wrong (Vol. XII American Turf Register, pp. 168, 230). Edgar did receive some backing from other sources - in Volume X of the American Turf Register (June, 1839, p. 357) he announced that the Raleigh, North Carolina, Jockey Club had resolved to purchase thirty copies of Volume I and 30 of Volume II when published, while the editor (Porter) noted that the Cincinnati and other Jockey Clubs had passed resolutions "of a similar character". In a letter dated August 11th, 1840, and written from Lynesville, North Carolina (Vol. XI, A.T.R., p. 492) Edgar said that he had "in the course of a few months past, obtained very many additions to my large and manifold collection of pedigrees of Thoroughbred horses". In the December 1842 issue of the American Turf Register (p. 699) he spoke of his "irrecoverable losses" and continued: "I will withhold my determination (to destroy the accumulated

MS.) a while longer for the benefit of the public. If they will without any further delay purchase up the whole edition of the first volume of the Stud Book and supply a subscription of 1,000 names at \$12 each to the second volume, I beg leave to add that myself and twelve other persons of the most competent talents in the country will prepare the MSS., previously to these being taken to Ireland, arranged for the press, and published as speedily as possible, in this country, thereafter".

Still hopeful Edgar announced in the March 1843 issue of the Turf Register (p. 167) "I have at present access to a complete set of the English Racing Calendar from 1709 to 1750 and Pick's Turf Register, besides the former book(s) from 1820 up to 1838; by these references I am enabled to be a competent judge of the racing qualities of every imported horse in the United States". Porter commented on this claim somewhat contemptuously and mentioned Edgar only once more - in the November 1843 issue of the American Turf Register (p. 622). Thereafter all is silence. Porter and whatever supporters Edgar may have retained had by now completely lost faith in the unfortunate Irishman. What became of the manuscript of Vol. II no one knows - most unfortunately Edgar would appear to have destroyed it, as he threatened.

Thanks to the continuing hospitality of his "Old Race Horse Region" hosts, Patrick Edgar continued to live in that region until the winter of 1857. Then, caught in a snowstorm, he contracted pneumonia and died at the house to which he had made his way, the residence of the Jiggets family on the Roanoke River above Saint Tammany ferry. He was granted the supreme act of southern hospitality and was buried in an unmarked grave in the family cemetery on the plantation. When his estate was settled by a Mecklenburg County court, although he had a few sums of money owed him, his entire worldly possessions consisted of a horse and saddle, total value sixty-nine dollars.

#### APPRAISAL

Although Herbert and Wallace were unnecessarily harsh in their criticism, most of the comments of Edgar's "Stud-book" were justified. Turf historians to-day, however, acknowledge their tremendous debt to Edgar, while those who are entertained by turf history have very much enjoyed the stories and traditions he recorded. Without Edgar we would know very little about colonial race horses and almost nothing about colonial Quarter Horses.

On the other hand Edgar did achieve a certain immortality through the pages of Volume I and II of what became the official American Stud Book, now the property of the Jockey Club. These two foundation volumes, published in 1873, were compiled by Sanders D. Bruce, a Kentuckian. As recorded in Volume III, No. 1 of the National Sporting Library Newsletter (December 1976) "Bruce was thoroughly familiar with pedigrees west of

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the Alleghenies, but — being unsure of earlier seaboard ancestry relied heavily on Edgar — for example he included 55 out of 61 'Famous American Quarter Running Horses' listed by Edgar." Of course Bruce included hundreds of Thoroughbred horses, adopting Edgar's pedigrees, faults and all. Since no revision of the foundation volumes of the American Stud Book has yet been published, Edgar lives on.

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## NEWCASTLE AND GUERINIERE

By Alexander Mackay-Smith

Three books in the National Sporting Library are cornerstones in the history of equitation. Ever since 1565, when Thomas Blundeville published in London his "Four Chief Offices Belonging to Horsemanship", a host of British and other English speaking horsemen have written many thousands of books about the art of riding. The horseman who achieved by far the greatest international reputation, however, was William Cavendish, created Duke of Newcastle. Born in 1592, he inherited an enormous fortune (his grandfather had been Treasurer to both Henry VIII and Edward VI), most of it spent in supporting Charles I who was not only impeached by Parliament but also beheaded! Fleeing to the continent in 1644, Newcastle established himself in Antwerp, occupying a house rented from the painter Rubens' window, where, with the remnants of his shattered fortunes, he built a covered school or manege, and bought several young horses, "de Barbarie et d'Espagne" (Barbs and Spanish). For the next 16 years most of his time was devoted to schooling horses in the arts of Haute Ecole and to the writing of a book on the subject, lavishly illustrated and altogether one of the handsomest volumes in the literature of equitation. Translated into French "par un Wallon", it was printed in folio in Antwerp, "chez Jacques van Meurs" in 1657 (some copies are dated 1658) in a very limited edition, perhaps 50 to 100 copies, for presentation to friends, family, eminent horsemen and important personages. The designs of the title page, of the 5 dedicatory pages and of the 36 double page illustrations were executed by the well known artist and illustrator Abraham van Diepenbeke (c. 1607-1675), a pupil of Rubens.

Newcastle had considerable influence on Francois Robichon de la Gueriniere (1688-1751) the folio edition (1733) of whose "Ecole de Cavalerie", with plates by Parrocel, is not only a beautifully produced volume, but ranks as the foundation book of modern dressage and equitation. The Library has both the 1st and 2nd (1751) editions of this beautiful book, the first being the Huth-Lord Lonsdale copy donated by Russell M. Arundel, the second donated by Miss Charlotte Noland, founder of the Foxcroft School, Middleburg. Gueriniere noted (Vol. I, p. 60) the small number of copies printed of the Newcastle

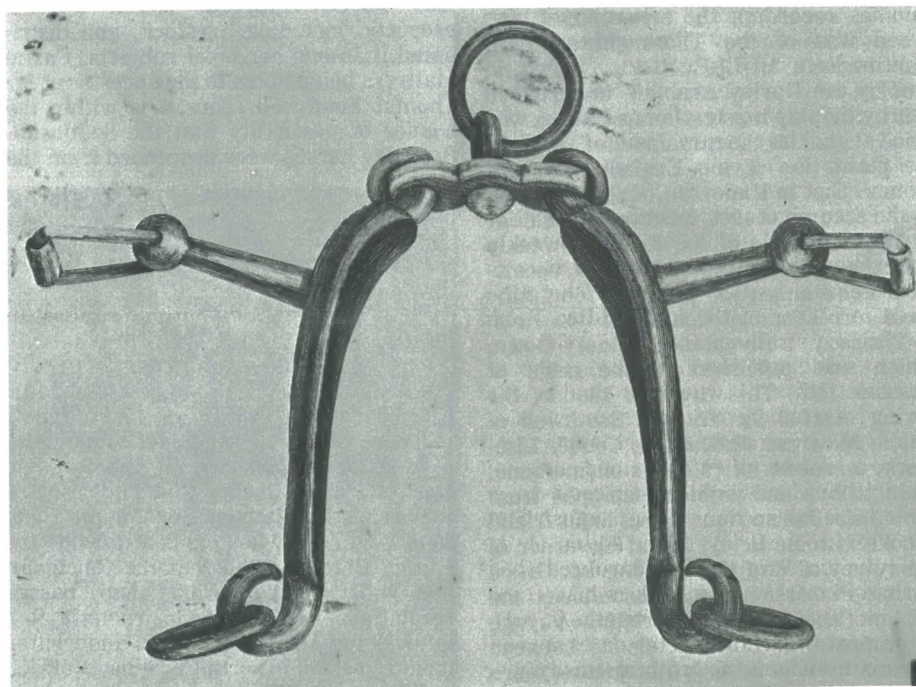
book and declared that the original copper plates from which the engravings were made had been destroyed. This statement was apparently brought to the attention of Newcastle's great grand daughter, the Countess of Oxford, who had inherited not only a copy of the 1657 Antwerp edition, but also the plates themselves. She then made these available to the London publisher, John Brindley, who in 1737 brought out a second edition in French. Because of the small number of impressions made from the plates in printing the first edition, the illustrations of the second edition are equally fine. Brindley also published an English translation, using the same plates, in 1743. The Library has a particularly fine copy of this edition donated by Mrs. Eleanor Langley Fletcher.

After the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, Newcastle, then 68 years old, regained his estates, but retired from public life, devoting his time to riding and to breeding race horses — several of the foundation mares of the General (Thoroughbred) Stud Book were at Welbeck, the Duke's principal residence. He also completely revised his book of 1657; this quite different text was published in London in 1667, in folio, but without illustrations, by Thomas Milburn as "A new method and extraordinary invention to dress horses." Even though very few copies of the Antwerp edition had been circulated, Newcastle had acquired a great reputation on the continent. To meet this demand Milburn had the 1667 book translated into French, unfortunately by someone with no equestrian background, which he published in 1671 and 1674. (The same text was

also published in Brussels in 1691 and 1694, and in Vienna in 1727).

In 1672 the Duke of Newcastle sent a copy of the 1671 French translation of his second book to Jacques de Solleysel (1617-1680), a master of equitation who had studied in Germany as well as in France; had instructed in Paris at the Academy of Bernardi (his pupil); and was an Ecuyer at the Grande Ecurie of Louis XIV. De Solleysel had published in 1664 his "Le Parfait Mareschal", the great veterinary book of the 17th century, which ran into countless editions, translated into English by Sir William Hope in 1696, parts of which were even included in American books on Farriery as late as the early 19th century. Appalled by the inadequacy of the translation, de Solleysel entered into an extensive correspondence with Newcastle and offered to produce a better translation which the author gratefully accepted. He also made extensive comments and additions which he proposed should be printed in italics to distinguish them from the translation of the original text. Newcastle so completely approved of de Solleysel's work, however, as to insist that the entire book be printed in uniform type, thus making it the definitive and most complete edition of this his second and ultimate work on equitation. It was published in quarto in Paris by Gervais Coluzier in 1677, with 7 plates, the first signed "Pesne", 6 being of horses, the 7th of the Newcastle cavesson. The Library has a splendid copy of this book, in its original binding, donated by Alexander Mackay-Smith.

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A metal core of the longeing cavesson designed by the Duke of Newcastle. When lined and attached to the nose by leather straps it was both comfortable and an efficient tool for schooling the horse.

From De Solleysel's 1677 French translation of the Duke of Newcastle's "A New Method and Extraordinary Invention to Dress Horses, and Work them" with corrections and additions approved by the author.

Allen Photo



We are thus fortunate to have the best texts of the two Newcastle books, written in Antwerp and at Welbeck in 1657 and 1667 and published, the first, a translation from French into English in London in 1743, and the second, with correction and additions by de Solleysel, a translation from English into French. This last text, unfortunately, has never been translated into Newcastle's native tongue - this could be a very constructive Ph.D. thesis, well worthy of present day publication.

Newcastle prescribed suppling exercises for the quarters, back and shoulders, thus fore-shadowing the shoulder-in whose invention is generally attributed to Gueriniere three quarters of a century later. He also designed a special cavesson used in conjunction with running reins to produce lateral flexion of the horse's neck, the nose pointing toward the point of the shoulder. His writings constitute a major contribution toward the development of dressage riding, while the paper, the print and the plates, with which his books were illustrated are among the handsomest in the history of equestrian book making.

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## 1666 IMPORTATION OF IRISH HOBBY'S INTO VIRGINIA

Until quite recently historians of the horse in America have assumed that the first importation of horses into the English colonies recording the seller buyer and breed was of the Thoroughbred Lord Huntingdon's BULLE ROCK, foaled in 1709 by the Darley Arabian, imported in 1730 by the ship master James Patton, who stood at stud for the remainder of his life at the plantation of the English merchant Samuel Gist in Hanover County, Virginia. In the autumn of 1966, however, the Editor of *The Chronicle of the Horse*, a weekly published in Middleburg, Virginia, received a communication from its long time Irish correspondent Colin Johnston Robb of Timpany, Ballynahinch, County Down, which was published in the issue of October 14th. This revealed that in the spring of 1666 Sir Thomas Southwell of Castle Mattress, Rathkeale, County Limerick, a breeder of "Hobbys of fine bone, mostly bays and peiballs" shipped from Cork a stallion and four mares to his friend Sir William Berkeley, Royal Governor of the colony of Virginia, who lived at Green Spring Plantation, near Jamestown, the capitol. "One mare died during the voyage to Jamestown. Correspondence between buyer and seller reveals that another mare had to be put down in 1667, she having broken her legs in a stampede during the great hurricane, but that the stallion and the two remaining mares seem to have given a good account of themselves." Mr. Robb obtained this information from the notebooks of his father, Hugh Arnold Robb, a historian some of whose earlier years had been spent in Canada. who

consequently took a particular interest in British colonial material. During the years 1903-1908 Hugh Robb worked in the Irish National Archives in Dublin making many abstracts of such material including the letters exchanged by Sir Thomas Southwell and Sir William Berkeley. His notes are now the only surviving records of this correspondence, for the Southwell papers were part of the Irish National Archives all of which were tragically destroyed by fire on June 30, 1922, when a body of mutineers led by Roderick O'Connor who had barricaded themselves inside the 18th century Four Courts Building, blew it up.

During the 16th and early 17th centuries the Irish Hobby was the world's fastest race horse, particularly over short distances. Governor Berkeley made this importation primarily to improve the speed of the strains which the Virginia colonists were developing to race at quarter of a mile distances, the ancestors of the modern Quarter Horse. Fortunately we know what an Irish Hobby looked like. The adjoining illustration is a photograph from the only perfect surviving copy, (obtained by the National Sporting Library from the Library of Edinburgh Scotland) of John Derricke's "Image of Ireland" published in London by John Daye in 1581. It shows the 15th Earl of Desmond (c. 1538-1583), a Kerne (foot-soldier) handing him a spear, with his Hobby held by a horse boy. In 1580 Desmond revolted against Queen Elizabeth - the illustration is from the Appendix to Derricke's book entitled "The Order of their Rebellion and Success of the Same." When Desmond was defeated and killed in 1583 Queen Elizabeth seized all his property, including livestock, and distributed it among her loyal subjects, Castle Mattress being given to the ancestor of Sir Thomas Southwell. Thus it is within the bounds of possibility that the Southwell-Berkeley horses were descended from the

stallion shown in this illustration, who could be an ancestor of the modern Quarter Horse.

The most important text on the Irish Hobby is a rather rare, slim volume "The History of the Irish Horse" by Michael F. Cox, M.D. published by Sealy, Bryers and Walker in Dublin in 1897, a copy of which is in the National Sporting Library. Dr. Cox, of course, had access to the now destroyed Irish National Archives. He was, like other equine historians of the period (compare "The Horse of America" by John H. Wallace, New York, 1897), proud to display his scholarship, but reluctant to ease the work of historians to follow by giving exact references as to his sources - the book contains neither footnotes, nor a bibliography. The staff of the National Sporting Library, however, by a bit of sleuthing, has been able to identify his sources with reference to author, publisher, year and place of publication, and page number. Much of this work has contributed to the forthcoming book, "The Colonial Quarter Horse", by Alexander Mackay Smith.

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Accompanying the June issue of the National Sporting Library Newsletter is a request for the Annual Membership contribution to the Friends of the National Sporting Library Association.

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The 15th Earl of Desmond with an Irish Hobby. The distortion in the photograph is due to the original appearing as a fold-out illustration to the book.

Photo made from the copy in the Edinburgh, Scotland Library

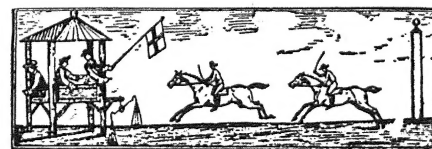


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